

Laxity in Enforcing Law For Bonding Taxis Leaves Victims Hopeless of Redress

Many of the "Accidents" of First Nine Months of 1922
Due to Recklessness of Drivers.

By Sophie Irene Loeb.

Laxity in the enforcement of the law passed by the last Legislature requiring that every taxicab in the city be bonded in the interest of the public as to accidents and deaths is causing wide comment.

Meantime the large number of deaths and accidents due to reckless taxicab drivers is startling, to say the least.

Since the first of the year to September 20 taxicabs in this city have killed 52 people and injured 1,666, making a total of 1,718 victims. There are 16,000 taxicabs running in the city, which makes an average of more than one accident to every ten taxicabs.

As to other motor vehicle accidents during the same period there were 50 people killed and 15,545 injured, making a total of 15,595. There are approximately 300,000 vehicles, which means a ratio of about one in every twenty that have killed or injured people. At the same time in the traffic courts 40 per cent. of the taxicabs have violations, while 9 per cent. of the other vehicles are charged with violations.

This disparaging difference is enough reason why there should be no more delay in bonding taxicabs, which, because of the nature of their business, run very fast on the streets of the city.

Also, it is estimated that nearly 90 per cent. of all vehicles, exclusive of taxicabs, are already insured against accidents and deaths.

These are only figures, but the heartrending human equation is chronicled in cold type in the Police Department records as to this terrible toll taken.

A resume of some of these unfortunate victims should arouse both public and officials to adequate protection from these fast-moving vehicles.

At No. 556 West 161st Street a mother mourns the death of her six-year-old boy. She was nursing her youngest child, when the boy, on the evening of August 3, went out to play in front of his house. A taxicab owned by the State Taxicab Company ran him down. There were many pedestrians on the street at the time. It seems that a horse-drawn vehicle was

in the boy's way and he did not see the taxi. It was said, too, that the driver of the taxi lost control of his machine. The child was taken to the Columbus Hospital and died.

The family has not prosecuted the driver, realizing that it would be of no avail, as the cab was not bonded. While the money would not restore the child's life, it would do some good in that family. The taxi man was arrested, but allowed to go free a few weeks later.

The mere, hard, cold facts reported in the police records state:

"Boy died of internal injuries at 8:05 P. M. at Columbus Hospital. No violation of traffic, no defect in vehicle, no defect in pavement."

But the child is dead and the family has no redress.

Four years ago, the mother of a

little girl, Catherine Gilmartin, died and left her a younger sister with their aunt, Mrs. Gallagher, who has cared for the children ever since.

On Sept. 2, while Mrs. Gallagher was away with Catherine's youngest sister, twelve years old, in company with other children, was playing near her home. She stepped off the sidewalk and a taxi, which was on the wrong side of the street, ran her down.

Mrs. Gallagher stated that particular were told her by neighbors.

The taxi was owned by the Yale Company, but was rented out to Benjamin Greening, chauffeur. He was teaching another man to run the car, and the apprentice was at the wheel at the time of the accident.

The chauffeur, it is alleged, did not put the brakes on until the child was dragged some distance, and in fact not before the car had reached Park Avenue, when his

attention was attracted by the cries of people on the street. A policeman arrested the chauffeur.

Greening was taken to Harlem Court and released on \$25,000 bail. If this chauffeur has nothing, the family will get nothing, because he is not bonded.

On Aug. 23, about 11 P. M., Sarah Steinberg, who had gone downstairs to buy something in a shop, was standing for a second at the window of the shop in the house where she lives.

A taxi, to avoid colliding with another machine, the driver running on the sidewalk, knocked the girl down and ran over her.

The chauffeur left the car where it was and reported to the police. The girl was taken to Gouverneur Hospital and died twenty hours later. She was a bright girl of twelve years, in the graduating class at P. S. No. 62.

The driver was arrested and was let out on \$5,000 bail. The action is still pending, but the

outcome is problematical, because he was not bonded.

Mr. and Mrs. Ellman came to the United States twelve years ago from Russia. The father had been a shoemaker many years and four years ago secured a little store opposite his home, No. 1749 Third Avenue, where he has made a precarious livelihood.

The family now consists of mother, father and five children ranging from ten months to twelve years.

On Aug. 1, 1922, Harry came home from school and went to buy a newspaper. While crossing the street a yellow taxi, owned by a private, came along without blowing its horn. It is alleged, and ran the child down.

The father got the particulars from passersby. The boy was taken in the defendant's taxi and brought to Mount Sinai Hospital, where he died half an hour later.

The case is still pending, and there might be some recovery in this instance, since this chauffeur is bonded.

Perhaps many of these accidents might not have occurred had these taxicab drivers been bonded and realized that if they were reckless very often they could not have their bonds re-

newed and as could not run their taxicabs if the law were enforced.

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A. Mirror Aluminum Self Basting Double Roaster, with tray.
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B. Aladdin Blue Enamelled Steel Self Basting Double Roaster, 9x14.
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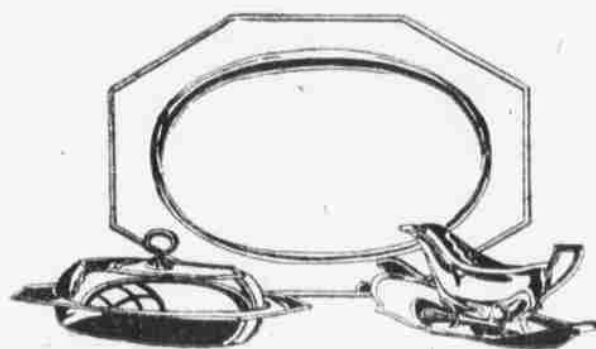
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